

The Howard Collector

Winter 1965

7



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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The Warrior copyright 1938 by Weird Tales for *Weird Tales*, January 1939.

Cupid vs. Pollux from *The Yellow Jacket*, February 10, 1927.



"SPEAR AND FANG"

TEVIS CLYDE SMITH

ROBERT E. HOWARD

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CONTENTS

Editorial Notes	2
Spear and Fang Robert E. Howard .	3
After "Recompense" Wade Wellman .	12
Letter Chandler Whipple .	13
Two Poems Robert E. Howard .	14
Four Letters Robert E. Howard .	19
The Warrior Emil Petaja .	26
Cupid vs. Pollux Robert E. Howard .	27
Denouement Tevis Clyde Smith .	31
Book Index	32

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EDITORIAL NOTES

"Spear and Fang" was Howard's first professional sale and is presented herein for that reason, although it is admittedly a very minor piece. It is believed that "The Dust Dance" was, or was intended to be, a very long poem; the four excerpts in this issue are all that have been located. These appeared in some of the destroyed issues of The Junto, but fortunately, Lenore Preece, a member of the mailing list of that little journal, copied out these extracts in a scrapbook.

The typescript of "Cimmeria" which accompanied the letter to Emil Petaja bore this inscription: "Written in Mission, Texas, February 1932; suggested by the memory of the hill-country above Fredericksburg seen in a mist of winter rain." The sonnet referred to in the Petaja letter is "The Warrior".

Howard and Robert Enders Allen once collaborated on a short western novel published under the title of "Boot-Hill Payoff" (Western Aces, October 1935); the original title being "The Last Ride". Until a clue to his identity was found among the agent's files, Allen was something of a mystery, as none of Howard's friends had ever heard of him.

Otis Kline Associates, the agent for the Howard Estate, went out of business at the end of 1964. I have accepted the handling of the Howard material for the Estate. Forthcoming books by Howard include a reprint of A GENT FROM BEAR CREEK and a collection of the historical adventure stories from Oriental Stories and Magic Carpet, to be entitled THE SOWERS OF THE THUNDER. The Lancer Conan volumes have been delayed due to difficulties with the hardback publisher, Gnome Press. The Magazine of Horror has been reprinting some of Howard's stories and has accepted some previously unpublished verse and a short story, some of which will have appeared by now.

SPEAR AND FANG

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

A-aea crouched close to the cave mouth, watching Ga-nor with wondering eyes. Ga-nor's occupation interested her, as well as Ga-nor himself. As for Ga-nor, he was too occupied with his work to notice her. A torch stuck in a niche in the cave wall dimly illuminated the roomy cavern, and by its light Ga-nor was laboriously tracing figures on the wall. With a piece of flint he scratched the outline and then with a twig dipped in ocher paint completed the figure. The result was crude, but gave evidence of real artistic genius, struggling for expression.

It was a mammoth that he sought to depict, and little A-aea's eyes widened with wonder and admiration. Wonderful! What though the beast lacked a leg and had no tail? It was tribesmen, just struggling out of utter barbarism, who were the critics, and to them Ga-nor was a past master.

However, it was not to watch the reproduction of a mammoth that A-aea hid among the scanty bushes by Ga-nor's cave. The admiration for the painting paled beside the look of positive adoration with which she favored the artist. Indeed, Ga-nor was not displeasing to the eye. Tall he was, towering well over six feet, leanly built, with mighty shoulders and narrow hips, the build of a fighting man. Both his hands and his feet were long and slim; and his features, thrown into bold profile by the flickering torchlight, were intelligent, with a high, broad forehead, topped by a mane of sandy hair.

A-aea herself was very easy to look upon. Her hair, as well as her eyes, was black and fell about her slim shoulders in a rippling wave. No ocher tattooing tinted her cheek, for she was still unmated.

Both the girl and the youth were perfect specimens of the great Cro-Magnon race which came from no man knows

where and announced and enforced their supremacy over beast and beast-man.

A-aea glanced about nervously. All ideas to the contrary, customs and taboos are much more narrow and vigorously enforced among savage peoples.

The more primitive a race, the more intolerant their customs. Vice and licentiousness may be the rule, but the appearance of vice is shunned and contemned. So if A-aea had been discovered, hiding near the cave of an unattached young man, denunciation as a shameless woman would have been her lot, and doubtless a public whipping.

To be proper, A-aea should have played the modest, demure maiden, perhaps skilfully arousing the young artist's interest without seeming to do so. Then, if the youth was pleased, would have followed public wooing by means of crude love-songs and music from reed pipes. Then barter with her parents and then -- marriage. Or no wooing at all, if the lover was wealthy.

But little A-aea was herself a mark of progress. Covert glances had failed to attract the attention of the young man who seemed engrossed with his artistry, so she had taken to the unconventional way of spying upon him, in hopes of finding some way to win him.

Ga-nor turned from his completed work, stretched and glanced toward the cave mouth. Like a frightened rabbit, little A-aea ducked and darted away.

When Ga-nor emerged from the cave, he was puzzled by the sight of a small, slender footprint in the soft loam outside the cave.

A-aea walked primly toward her own cave, which was, with most of the others, at some distance from Ga-nor's cave. As she did so, she noticed a group of warriors talking excitedly in front of the chief's cave.

A mere girl might not intrude upon the councils of men, but such was A-aea's curiosity, that she dared a scolding by slipping nearer. She heard the words "foot-print" and "gur-na" (man-ape).

The footprints of a gur-na had been found in the forest, not far from the caves.

"Gur-na" was a word of hatred and horror to the people of the caves, for creatures whom the tribesmen called "gur-na", or man-apes, were the hairy monsters of another age, the brutish men of the Neandertal. More feared than mammoth or tiger, they had ruled the forests until the Cro-Magnon men had come and waged savage warfare against them. Of mighty power and little mind, savage, bestial and cannibalistic, they inspired the tribesmen with loathing and horror -- a horror transmitted through the ages in tales of ogres and goblins, of werewolves and beast-men.

They were fewer and more cunning, then. No longer they rushed roaring to battle, but cunning and frightful, they slunk about the forests, the terror of all beasts, brooding in their brutish minds with hatred for the men who had driven them from the best hunting grounds.

And ever the Cro-Magnon men trailed them down and slaughtered them, until sullenly they had withdrawn far into the deep forests. But the fear of them remained with the tribesmen, and no woman went into the jungle alone.

Sometimes children went, and sometimes they returned not; and searchers found but signs of a ghastly feast, with tracks that were not the tracks of beasts, nor yet the tracks of men.

And so a hunting party would go forth and hunt the monster down. Sometimes it gave battle and was slain, and sometimes it fled before them and escaped into the depths of the forest, where they dared not follow. Once a hunting party, reckless with the chase, had pursued a fleeing gur-na into the deep forest and there, in a deep ravine, where overhanging limbs shut out the sunlight, numbers of the Neandertalers had come upon them.

So no more entered the forests.

A-aea turned away, with a glance at the forest.

Somewhere in its depths lurked the beast-man, piggish eyes glinting crafty hate, malevolent, frightful.

Someone stepped across her path. It was Ka-nanu, the son of a councilor of the chief.

She drew away with a shrug of her shoulders. She did not like Ka-nanu and she was afraid of him. He wooed her with a mocking air, as if he did it merely for amusement and would take her whenever he wished, anyway. He seized her by the wrist.

"Turn not away, fair maiden," said he. "It is your slave, Ka-nanu."

"Let me go," she answered. "I must go to the spring for water."

"Then I will go with you, moon of delight, so that no beast may harm you."

And accompany her he did, in spite of her protests.

"There is a gur-na abroad," he told her sternly. "It is lawful for a man to accompany even an unmated maiden, for protection. And I am Ka-nanu," he added, in a different tone; "do not resist me too far, or I will teach you obedience."

A-aea knew somewhat of the man's ruthless nature. Many of the tribal girls looked with favor on Ka-nanu, for he was bigger and taller even than Ga-nor and more handsome in a reckless, cruel way. But A-aea loved Ga-nor and she was afraid of Ka-nanu. Her very fear of him kept her from resisting his approaches too much. Ga-nor was known to be gentle with women, if careless of them, while Ka-nanu, thereby showing himself to be another mark of progress, was proud of his success with women and used his power over them in no gentle fashion.

A-aea found Ka-nanu was to be feared more than a beast, for at the spring just out of sight of the caves, he seized her in his arms.

"A-aea," he whispered, "my little antelope, I have you at last. You shall not escape me."

In vain she struggled and pleaded with him. Lifting her in his mighty arms he strode away into the forest.

Frantically she strove to escape, to dissuade him.

"I am not powerful enough to resist you," she said, "but I will accuse you before the tribe."

"You will never accuse me, little antelope," he said, and she read another, even more sinister intention in his cruel countenance.

On and on into the forest he carried her, and in the midst of a glade he paused, his hunter's instinct alert.

From the trees in front of them dropped a hideous monster, a hairy, misshapen, frightful thing.

A-aea's scream re-echoed through the forest, as the thing approached. Ka-nanu, white-lipped and horrified, dropped A-aea to the ground and told her to run. Then, drawing knife and ax, he advanced.

The Neandertal man plunged forward on short, gnarled legs. He was covered with hair and his features were more hideous than an ape's because of the grotesque quality of the man in them. Flat, flaring nostrils, retreating chin, fangs, no forehead whatever, great, immensely long arms dangling from sloping, incredible shoulders, the monster seemed like the devil himself to the terrified girl. His apelike head came scarcely to Ka-nanu's shoulders, yet he must have outweighed the warrior by nearly a hundred pounds.

On he came like a charging buffalo, and Ka-nanu met him squarely and boldly. With flint ax and obsidian dagger he thrust and smote, but the ax was brushed aside like a toy and the arm that held the knife snapped like a stick in the misshapen hand of the Neandertaler. The girl saw the councilor's son wrenched from the ground and swung into the air, saw him hurled clear across the glade, saw the monster leap after him and rend him limb from limb.

Then the Neandertaler turned his attention to her. A new expression came into his hideous eyes as he lumbered toward her, his great hairy hands horridly smeared with blood, reaching toward her.

Unable to flee, she lay dizzy with horror and fear.

And the monster dragged her to him, leering into her eyes. He swung her over his shoulder and waddled away through the trees; and the girl, half-fainting, knew that he was taking her to his lair, where no man would dare come to rescue her.

Ga-nor came down to the spring to drink. Idly he noticed the faint footprints of a couple who had come before him. Idly he noticed that they had not returned.

Each footprint had its individual characteristic. That of the man he knew to be Ka-nanu. The other track was the same as that in front of his cave. He wondered, idly as Ga-nor was wont to do all things except the painting of pictures.

Then, at the spring, he noticed that the footprints of the girl ceased, but that the man's turned toward the jungle and were more deeply imprinted than before. Therefore Ka-nanu was carrying the girl.

Ga-nor was no fool. He knew that a man carries a girl into the forest for no good purpose. If she had been willing to go, she would not have been carried.

Now Ga-nor (another mark of progress) was inclined to meddle in things not pertaining to him. Perhaps another man would have shrugged his shoulders and gone his way, reflecting that it would not be well to interfere with a son of a councilor. But Ga-nor had few interests, and once his interest was roused he was inclined to see a thing through. Moreover, though not renowned as a fighter, he feared no man.

Therefore, he loosened ax and dagger in his belt, shifted his grip on his spear, and took up the trail.

On and on, deeper and deeper into the forest, the Neandertaler carried little A-aea.

The forest was silent and evil, no birds, no insects broke the stillness. Through the overhanging trees no sunlight filtered. On padded feet that made no noise the Neandertaler hurried on.

Beasts slunk out of his path. Once a great python came slithering through the jungle and the Neandertaler took to the trees with surprizing speed for one of his gigantic bulk. He was not at home in the trees, however, not even as much as A-aea would have been.

Once or twice the girl glimpsed another such monster as her captor. Evidently they had gone far beyond the vaguely defined boundaries of her race. The other Neandertal men avoided them. It was evident that they lived as do beasts, uniting only against some common enemy and not often then. Therein had lain the reason for the success of the Cro-Magnard's warfare against them.

Into a ravine he carried the girl, and into a cave, small and vaguely illumined by the light from without. He threw her roughly to the floor of the cave, where she lay, too terrified to rise.

The monster watched her, like some demon of the forest. He did not even jabber at her, as an ape would have done. The Neandertalers had no form of speech whatever.

He offered her meat of some kind -- uncooked, of course. Her mind reeling with horror, she saw that it was the arm of a Cro-Magnard child. When he saw she would not eat, he devoured it himself, tearing the flesh with great fangs.

He took her between his great hands, bruising her soft flesh. He ran rough fingers through her hair, and when he saw that he hurt her he seemed filled with a fiendish glee. He tore out handfuls of her hair, seeming to enjoy devilishly the torturing of his fair captive. A-aea set her teeth and would not scream as she had done at first, and presently he desisted.

The leopard-skin garment she wore seemed to enrage him. The leopard was his hereditary foe. He plucked it from her and tore it to pieces.

And meanwhile Ga-nor was hurrying through the forest. He was racing now, and his face was a devil's mask, for he had come upon the monster's tracks, leading

away from it.

And in the cave in the ravine the Neandertaler reached for A-aea.

She sprang back and he plunged toward her. He had her in a corner but she slipped under his arm and sprang away. He was still between her and the outside of the cave.

Unless she could get past him, he would corner her and seize her. So she pretended to spring to one side. The Neandertaler lumbered in that direction, and quick as a cat she sprang the other way and darted past him, out into the ravine.

With a bellow he charged after her. A stone rolled beneath her foot, flinging her headlong; before she could rise his hand seized her shoulder. As he dragged her into the cave, she screamed, wildly, frenziedly, with no hope of rescue, just the scream of a woman in the grasp of a beast.

Ga-nor heard that scream as he bounded down into the ravine. He approached the cave swiftly but cautiously. As he looked in, he saw red rage. in the vague light of the cave, the great Neandertaler stood, his piggish eyes on his foe, hideous, hairy, blood-smeared, while at his feet, her soft white body contrasting with the shaggy monster, her long hair gripped in his blood-stained hand, lay A-aea.

The Neandertaler bellowed, dropped his captive and charged. And Ga-nor met him, not matching brute strength with his lesser might, but leaping back and out of the cave. His spear leaped and the monster bellowed as it tore through his arm. Leaping back again, the warrior jerked his spear and crouched. Again the Neandertaler rushed, and again the warrior leaped away and thrust, this time for the great hairy chest. And so they battled, speed and intelligence against brute strength and savagery.

Once the great, lashing arm of the monster caught Ga-nor upon the shoulder and hurled him a dozen feet away, rendering that arm nearly useless for a time. The Neandertaler bounded after him, but Ga-nor flung himself

to one side and leaped to his feet. Again and again his spear drew blood, but it seemed only to enrage the monster.

Then before the warrior knew it, the wall of the ravine was at his back and he heard A-aea shriek as the monster rushed in. The spear was torn from his hand and he was in the grasp of his foe. The great arms encircled his neck and shoulders, the great fangs sought his throat. He thrust his elbow under the retreating chin of his antagonist, and with his free hand struck the hideous face again and again; blows that would have felled an ordinary man but which the Neandertal beast did not even notice.

Ga-nor felt consciousness going from him. The terrific arms were crushing him, threatening to break his neck. Over the shoulder of his foe he saw the girl approaching with a great stone, and he tried to motion her back.

With a great effort he reached down over the monster's arm and found his ax. But so close were they clinched together that he could not draw it. The Neandertal man set himself to break his foe to pieces as one breaks a stick. But Ga-nor's elbow was thrust under his chin, and the more the Neandertal man tugged, the deeper drove the elbow into this hairy throat. Presently he realized that fact and flung Ga-nor away from him. As he did so, the warrior drew his ax, and striking with the fury of desperation, clove the monster's head.

For a minute Ga-nor stood reeling above his foe, then he felt a soft form within his arms and saw a pretty face, close to his.

"Ga-nor!" A-aea whispered, and Ga-nor gathered the girl in his arms.

"What I have fought for I will keep," said he.

And so it was that the girl who went forth into the forest in the arms of an abductor came back in the arms of a lover and a mate.

AFTER "RECOMPENSE"

BY WADE WELLMAN

I have not known the depth of love, by which the world is spun,
But I have sobbed for a gallant friend who cursed me in the sun.
I have not sensed the joy that waits for house and home and wife,
But I have slain the blackest curse that plagued my torrid life.

I have not dreamed of phantom prowlers crying to the moon,
But I have walked in grisly paths where spirits wept at noon.
I have not clasped your hand, nor seen the footsteps of your age,
But I have followed every step you marked across the page.

I have not climbed the lunar peaks, nor walked the sands of Mars,
But I have walked with Dante in the Heaven of the Stars.
I never heard your voice, nor saw the power in your eyes,
But I have felt your strength, and seen the flame that never dies.

--June 16, 1964

LETTER:

Chandler Whipple to Glenn Lord,
dated July 20, 1965

Dear Mr. Lord

Yours is truly a voice out of the past. Yes, I am the man who also wrote under the name of Robert Enders Allen. I am only sorry that I cannot be of much help to you.

As I recall, that was the first long western I ever wrote. It kicked around for a time, almost but not quite selling. One day Otis Kline stopped in to see me at Popular Publications, where I was then working as an editor, and asked if he couldn't try to sell something of mine that I had failed to market. I gave him "The Last Ride". He told me he thought he could get Bob Howard to turn it into a saleable piece, and I told him to go ahead. I did not know Bob Howard, but did know him as a good western writer.

He did a good job on the collaboration, for the piece sold the first time out, I believe, and we split the proceeds fifty-fifty. That would have been in 1934 or 1935. But all this was handled through Otis, and I never actually met Bob Howard. Apparently, as far as I can tell from my correspondence files, we were never even in touch with each other -- probably because we had no need for further collaboration.

Thus, as you see, I have nothing I can offer you. If I had, I should be only too glad to give it to you. And I wish you all success in further search for Howard material. You certainly did a good job of digging me out, and your letter was forwarded with reasonable promptness by A. S. Barnes.

Cordially,
Chandler Whipple

THE DUST DANCE

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

For I, with the shape of my kin, the ape,
And the soul of a soaring hawk,
I fought my way from the jungle grey,
Where the hunting creatures stalk.

For I was made of the dust and the dew,
The dust and the clouds and the rain,
The snow and the grass, and when I pass,
I'll fade to the dust again.

I laughed when Nero's minions sent
Fire tortured souls to the sky.
Without the walls of Pilate's halls,
I shouted, "Crucify!"

I roared my glee to the sullen sea
Where Abel's blood was shed.
My jeer was loud in the gory crowd
That stoned St. Stephen dead.

You say God's spark has kindled my eye,
As the sun-rise reddens the east;
Into your beards I roar the lie --
'Tis the gleam of the stalking beast.

Oh, ye prophets, men of Israel,
Doff the sandal and the staff --
Moons rise silver over Kabul --
Follow me and learn to laugh.

* * * * *

The men go up and the men go down
And who shall follow the track of men?
The dust spins slow in the desert town,
And a fog drifts white on the silent fen.

The sword is broken, the shield is bent --
Our backs are at the wall;
Stark and silent they lay who went
To harry the coasts of Gaul.

From the north's blue deeps our galleys sweep
To south and west and east;
We bring our bows from the northern snows
That the great grey wolves may feast.

* * * * *

Grim, grim, grim the elephants were chanting,
Chanting in the jungle in the dim, dark dawn;
Through the waving branches were the late stars slanting,
Beating up the morning ere the night was gone.

Lion in the morning, crouching by the river.
Red birds flitting with a sing-song shrill.
Morning like a topaz, the green fronds a-quiver.
Scent of lush a-wafting in the dawn air still.

Moses was our leader when we came up out of Egypt --
Came up out of Egypt so many years ago --
When I think of magic, I always think of Moses,
Riding down to glory while the hautboys blow.

Oh, the plain was dusty -- how the heathen roar! --
Joshua and Israel! Hear the trumpets blow! --
How we shook the desert! -- thank a Canaan whore --
Roaring in our triumph at the walls of Jericho.

* * * * *

Oh, Jezebel, oh, Jezebel,
They hurled you from the wall,
And all the priests and prudes of Israel
Gave thanks to see you fall.

But I could laugh with Jezebel,
And kiss her on the lips,
And strip the scarf from off her breasts,
The girdle from her hips.

For I foreswear Elijah,
Forget that Adam fell,
To press the waist of Lilith
And laugh with Jezebel.

Oh, brother Cain, oh, brother Cain,
I take you by the hand,
For Abel was the first prude
To cumber Eden's land.

Then down the road that leads to hell,
We strode, a merry band --
Sargon, Belshazzar, Jezebel,
Cain with his bloody hand.

CIMMERIA

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

I remember

The dark woods, masking slopes of sombre hills;
The grey clouds' leaden everlasting arch;
The dusky streams that flowed without a sound,
And the lone winds that whispered down the passes.

Vista on vista marching, hills on hills,
Slope beyond slope, each dark with sullen trees,
Our gaunt land lay. So when a man climbed up
A rugged peak and gazed, his shaded eye
Saw but the endless vista -- hill on hill,
Slope beyond slope, each hooded like its brothers.

It was a gloomy land that seemed to hold
All winds and clouds and dreams that shun the sun,
With bare boughs rattling in the lonesome winds,
And the dark woodlands brooding over all,
Not even lightened by the rare dim sun
Which made squat shadows out of men; they called it
Cimmeria, land of Darkness and deep Night.

It was so long ago and far away
I have forgot the very name men called me.
The axe and flint-tipped spear are like a dream,
And hunts and wars are shadows. I recall
Only the stillness of that sombre land;
The clouds that piled forever on the hills,
The dimness of the everlasting woods.
Cimmeria, land of Darkness and the Night.

Oh, soul of mine, born out of shadowed hills,
To clouds and winds and ghosts that shun the sun,
How many deaths shall serve to break at last
This heritage which wraps me in the grey
Apparel of ghosts? I search my heart and find
Cimmeria, land of Darkness and the Night.

LETTER:

Robert E. Howard to
Harold Preece, no date

Salaam:

I've been very neglectful of my correspondence lately. But no matter. Nothing I could say would be of any interest. I've neglected the Epworth League and Sunday School lately but think I'll start back. It's nothing but a lot of infernal tripe, a lot of muck, a lot of nothingness, but I'm no one to be particular.

I'm not worrying about my Irish past. What has my Celtic blood ever done to me but give me a restless and unstable mind that gives me no rest in anything I do? Damn the Shan Van Vocht, and the ancestors that went to Sassenach gallows for her, and damn the Irish and damn the black Milesian blood in my veins that makes me like driftwood fighting the waves and gives me no peace or rest waking or sleeping or riding or dreaming or traveling or wooing, drunken or sober, with hunger or slumber on me. A sighing in the green leaves of all the trees, and a nameless sorrow in the black stars; and the white weeping winds are tugging at my heart forever and the whisper of oceans against the black sands at night is like the arms of a gallows and an ancient sadness haunts the sunrises and the sunsets, and the shuddering of the rivers. Damn Saint Padraic; he drove the snakes from Eirean but he could not drive the mist from an Irish heart. And the heart of Erin is thin as smoke against the wind and brittle as crystal. The fall of an empire and the slaughter of millions may not shake it, but the drifting of a leaf before the wind or the song of the wild geese, or the moonlight on a still bay may shiver it into a million shining shards.

If you get a typewriter, get any kind with a standard key board. The rottenest is better than none, and the finest is none too damned good.

I saw Truett and Clyde yesterday for a short time. A few weeks ago I spent the week-end with them. With Clyde rather; Truett had gone to Waco and I stayed over Tuesday to get to be with him, awhile. I also saw one of Eugene O'Neill's dramas "The Ile" put on by Howard Payne students. They won first place with it in Lubbock or some such damned place where they went to have a state-wide dramatic contest. The drama of course was powerful and the kids did better than I thought they could. Of course, I'm no art critic and I never saw any really great dramas put on by any great actors.

I haven't been drunk in a long time. I need to get drunk. My mental and physical condition calls for it. I think I'll go to Mexico this summer if I can. I reckon they'll let a white man in to get a drink of beer, at least. I sympathize with the Federal government in this case, at least, but if I got into the fight, I'd probably join the Rebels.

War is threatening with England. We will fight her within a few more years. I have relatives all over the British Isles and I give not one single damn for all of them, nor they for me.

Truett says he needs a drunk too..... What a hit he'd have made back in the Middle Ages! A true swaggering, ruthless swashbuckler at heart if there ever was one! He's confined too much by this puny age in which we live.

I don't know whether to go to Sunday School in the morning or not; maybe I ought to get drunk instead.

I'm not reading anything these days. It's all wind and shadows. Books, books, books - great God, there's no end to them. New writers, new publishers springing up, all cloaking ancient whores with new petticoats. Scarcely a new thought in ten thousand. Books - the most futile and cumbersome of man's inventions. Art - philosophy - culture - literature - ghosts of smoke that the wind blows

away. In a century, an age, an eon - all in a breath in the life of the planet. Nothing is stable, nothing enduring. I think this or I think that and it matters not one single damn what I or you or anyone thinks. Water whipping over the millrace of time; waves on the shores of eternity. A breath, a whisper in the wind. And ten million forests give up their virgin wood annually to furnish paper for fools to scribble on and worse fools to strain their eyes over.

I haven't heard from Booth lately. I liked Strachan's article in the latest Junto. The last I've seen, I mean. A naked negress is a rather fascinating study, when young and lissome. Truett's article was about the best of its kind he's written yet I think.

Clyde's preparing a novel on college life, I think. It will sell I'm sure and will probably cause an upheaval. He's gone to the roots of the college system in America.

LETTER:

Robert E. Howard to
Harold Preece,
postmarked March 24, 1930

Thanks for the picture. How much longer are you going to have to stay in Kansas? Thanks very much for intimating that I could write an epic of the Wild Geese, but I think you overestimate my rhyming abilities. Say, you mentioned a correspondent in England - I wonder if you'd do me a favor. I hear that there is a larger market for bizarre and out-of-the-ordinary stories in the British Isles than in this country, but I've been unable to get any real information on the subject. I wrote to a certain English writer about it, but the Sassenach scut never answered my letter. Now if you don't mind, I wish you'd ask your correspondent to give you the addresses of three or four magazines of the popular fiction type. I have a fairly good income from various American magazines, and if I could get in with a few on the other side of the pond, I'd go to England, for a while anyway.

I think you'll like the last story I sold *Weird Tales*, though of course I don't know when it'll come out. It deals with the Roman invasion of Caledonia and the war of the waning Pictish empire against the legions, when Picts, Western Britons and Dalriadan Gaels united against the common enemy. You may also like the new character I have created for the new magazine that the *Weird Tales* company is preparing to publish soon. This character is one Turlogh Dubh O'Brien and the action is laid mainly in the British Isles, in the half-century following Clontarf. I have submitted only one tale concerning this character, and it was accepted with an apparent relish, but I hope I can sell a series of stories on the same idea.

I remember you once mentioning that so many localities in Ireland have Germanic rather than Celtic names. Most of the names are of Gaelic origin, having been Anglicized or Danized, if I may use the words. Thus, Leinster, Munster and Ulster are Celto-Danish - that -ster being the Danish addition to Laigheann, Mumhain and Ulahd. The pronunciations are, I think, Linn, Moon, or Mun, and Ula.

I got a letter from Buoth O'Mumhainigh, or since the spelling has been Anglicized, Booth Mooney. He mentioned that his story was coming out in the next Ten Story Magazine....

Well, my imagination doesn't seem to be very lively so I'll let it ride; write soon.

LETTER:

Robert E. Howard to
Kirk Mashburn,
no date

Dear Mr. Mashburn:

I am writing to express my appreciation for your remarks concerning "The Dark Man", in the Eyrie of the current copy of Weird Tales. You expressed my own ideas on the matter exactly. While "The Dark Man" was not originally written for Weird Tales, but for the planned Strange Stories, which was never published, it always seemed to me that it contained enough weird touches to justify its presence in the former magazine. Thanks for coming to its defense.

I've been intending writing you for some time, anyway. Mr. Price mentions you often in his letters, and I have been much interested in your work in Weird Tales. I particularly remember "Tony", "Sola", "Placide's Wife", and your recent "Vengeance of Ixmal" -- a powerful tale. I hope to have the opportunity of reading more of your work soon.

If it's convenient I'd like to hear from you. I correspond with several Weird Tale writers - Price, Lovecraft, Dwyer and Talman - and I'd like to add your name to that very interesting group.

Cordially,

Robert E. Howard

LETTER:

Robert E. Howard to
Emil Petaja,
dated December 17, 1934

Dear Mr. Petaja:

Thank you very much for the splendid sonnet. I feel deeply honored that a poem of such fine merit should be dedicated to me. You seem to grasp the motif of my stories, the compelling idea-force behind them which is the only excuse for their creation, more completely than any one I have yet encountered. This fine sonnet reveals your understanding of the abstractions I have tried to embody in these tales.

In response to your request for an ms. copy, I am sure I can find something of the sort, when I rearrange my files, which are at the present in a chaotic state. In the meantime I am enclosing a so far unpublished bit of verse, "Cimmeria", for your notebook. Hope you like it.

Thanking you again for the splendid sonnet, I am,

Cordially,

Robert E. Howard

THE WARRIOR

To Robert E. Howard

BY EMIL PETAJA

From ancient dark Cimmeria he came,
With sword uplifted, on that bloody day,
To join the falling forces in affray,
And all triumphant spurn eternal fame.
Men trembled at the mention of his name,
And humbly stepped aside to clear a way;
"You are our King," they said. He answered, "Nay,"
And left them wondering what could be his aim.

I saw him then, and still I see him now,
Cryptic and silent, on a lone hill's brow,
Watching with brooding eyes the scene below
Where flame the earth and sky in scarlet glow:
He grasps his curious staff in mighty hands
And strides into the dusk, toward other lands. . . .

CUPID VS. POLLUX

BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

As I am coming up the steps of the fraternity house, I meet Tarantula Soons, a soph with an ingrown disposition and a goggle eye.

"You're lookin' for Spike, I take it?" said he, and upon me admittin' the fact, he gives me a curious look and remarks that Spike is in his room.

I go up, and all the way up the stairs, I hear somebody chanting a love song in a voice that is incitement to justifiable homicide. Strange as it seems, this atrocity is emanating from Spike's room, and as I enter, I see Spike himself, seated on a divan, and singing somethin' about lovers' moons and soft, red lips. His eyes are turned soulfully toward the ceiling and he is putting great feeling in the outrageous bellow which he imagines is the height of melody. To say I am surprized is putting it mildly and as Spike turns and says, "Steve, ain't love wonderful?" you could have knocked me over with a pile-driver. Besides standing six feet and seven inches and scaling upwards of 270 pounds, Spike has a map that makes Firpo look like an ad for the fashionable man, and is neitherto about as sentimental as a rhinoceros.

"Yeh? And who is she?" I ask sarcastically, but he only sighs amorously and quotes poetry. At that I fizz over.

"So that's why you ain't to the gym training?" I yawp. "You big chunka nothin', the tournament for the inter-collegiate boxin' title comes off tomorrow and here you are, you overgrown walrus, sentimentallin' around like a three year old yearlin' calf."

"G'wan," says he, tossin' a haymakin' right to my jaw in an absentminded manner, "I can put over any them palukas without no trainin'."

"Yes," I sneers, climbin' to my wobbling feet, "and when you stack up against Monk Gallranan you won't need

any trainin'. That's a cinch."

"Boxin'," says the infatuated boob, "is degradin'. I bet she thinks so. I don't know whether I'll even enter the tourneyment or not."

"Hey!" I yells, "After all the work I've done gettin' you in shape. You figurin' on throwin' the college down?"

"Aw, go take a run around the block," says Spike, drawing back his lip in an ugly manner.

"G'wan, you boneheaded elephant!" says I, drivin' my left to the wrist in his solar plexus and the battle was on. Anyway, at the conclusion, I yelled up to him from the foot of the stairs "where the college will be too small for you."

His sole answer was to slam the door so hard that he shook the house but the next day when I was lookin' for a substitute for the heavyweight entries, the big yam appears, with a smug and self satisfied look on his map.

"I've decided to fight, Steve," he says grandly. "She will have a ringside seat and women adore physical strength and power when allied to manly beauty."

"All right," says I, "get into your ring togs. Your bout is the main event of the day and will come last."

This managing a college boxing show is no cinch. If things go wrong, the manager gets the blame and if they don't, the fighters get the hand. I remember once I even substituted for a welterweight entry who didn't show up. Just to give the fans a run for their money, I lowered my guard the third round and invited my antagonist to hit me -- he did -- they were four hours bringing me to and the fact that it was discovered he had a horseshoe concealed in his glove didn't increase my regard for the game. They've got the horseshoe in the museum now, but it isn't much to look at as a horseshoe, being bent all out of shape where it came in contact with my jaw.

But to get back to the tournament. The college Spike and I represented had indifferent fortune in the first bouts; our featherweight entry won the decision on points and our

flyweight tied with a fellow from St. Janice's. As usual, heavyweights being scarce, Spike and Monk Gallranan from Burke's University were the only entries. This gorilla is nearly as tall and heavy as Spike, and didn't make the football team on account of his habit of breaking the arms and legs of the team in practice scrimmage. He is even more prehistoric looking than Spike, so you can imagine what those two cavemen looked like when they squared off together. Spike was jubilant, however, at the chance of distinguishing himself in an athletic way, he having always been too lazy to come out for football and the like. And his girl was there in a seat on the front row. The bout didn't last long, so I don't know of a better way than to give it round by round. What those two saps didn't know about the finer points of boxin' would fill several encyclopedias, but I'd had a second rate for giving Spike some secret instructions on infightin', and I expected him to win by close range work, infightin' bein' a lost art to the average amateur.

Round 1

Spike missed a left for the head and Monk sent a left to the body. Spike put a right to the face and got three left jabs to the nose in return. They traded rights to the body, and Monk staggered Spike with a sizzlin' left to the wind. Monk missed with a right and they clinch. Spike nailed Monk with a straight right to the jaw at the break. Monk whipped a left to the head and a right to the body and Spike rocked him back on his heels with a straight left to the face.

Round 2

Monk missed a right but slammed a left to the jaw. They clinched and Spike roughed in close. Monk staggered Spike on the break with a right to the jaw. Monk drove Spike across the ring with lefts and rights to head and body. Spike covered up, then kicked through with a right uppercut to the jaw that nearly tore Monk's head off. Monk clinched and Spike punished him with short straight rights to the body.

Just at the gong Spike staggered Monk with a left hook to the jaw.

Round 3

Monk blocked Spike's left lead and uppercut him three times to the jaw. Spike swung wild and Monk staggered him with a straight right to the jaw. Another straight right started him to bleeding at the lips. Spike came out of it with a fierce rally and drove Monk to the ropes with a series of short left hooks to the wind and head. Monk launched an attack of his own and battered Spike to the middle of the ring where they stood toe to toe, trading smashes to head and body. Monk started a fierce rush and a straight left for the jaw. Spike ducked, let the punch slide over his shoulder, and crossed his right to Monk's jaw, and Monk hit the mat. Just as the referee reached "Nine" the gong sounded.

Monk's seconds worked over him but he was still groggy as he came out for the fourth round. I shouted for Spike to finish him quick, but be careful.

Spike stepped up, warily; they sparred for a second, then Spike stepped in and sank his left to the wrist in Monk's solar plexus, following up with a right to the button that would have knocked down a house. Monk hit the mat and lay still.

Then Spike, the boob, turns his back on his fallen foeman and walks over to the ropes smilin' and bowin'. He opens his mouth to say somethin' to his girl -- the crowd yells, "Look out, you big stiff!" -- and Monk, who has risen meanwhile, beating the count, lifts his right from the floor and places it squarely beneath Spike's sagging jaw. The referee could have counted a million.

But afterwards Spike says to me, sitting on the ring floor, still in his ring togs, he says, "Steve, girls is a lotta hokum. I'm offa 'em," he says.

Says I, "Then if you've found that out, it's worth the soakin' you got," I says.

DENOUEMENT

BY TEVIS CLYDE SMITH

The horns of brass beat flaming, burning dawns
Into the world, and we shall claim our share
Of all the beautiful, and all the fair
Things we can find before we too are gone

Beyond the stars. We rove, the world our trust,
While mirth is once more ours for the day:
We laugh; our laughter is so bright and gay
For men who shall so soon be crumbling dust.

The thought of death? You said: "That makes me brave.
The coward, only, fears the darkened night,
And the fool, only, runs after the light!"
You had no fear, and yet your face was grave.

"We are too young to talk of death," I said.
"That is a topic for men long grown old.
Let's talk of nights of silver, days of gold,
And life!" I grasped your arm -- but you were dead.

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BOOK INDEX

A GENT FROM BEAR CREEK, Herbert Jenkins, London, 1937, pp. 312, 7s 6d, o.p. Jacket artist unknown.

Striped Shirts and Busted Hearts / Mountain Man / Meet Cap'n Kidd / Guns of the Mountains / A Gent from Bear Creek / The Feud Buster / The Road to Bear Creek / The Scalp Hunter / Cupid from Bear Creek / The Haunted Mountain / Educate or Bust / War on Bear Creek / When Bear Creek Came to Chawed Ear

(Note: Under their entry for A GENT FROM BEAR CREEK, the CUMULATIVE BOOK INDEX lists McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, and a price of \$2.00; inquiry reveals that they acted as exclusive agents for distribution of Herbert Jenkins books in Canada and did not publish an edition of the book.)

THE HYBORIAN AGE, LANY Cooperative Publications, Los Angeles, 1938, pp. 22, 35¢, o.p. Paperbound, no cover illustration. Interior illustrations: an outline of the impressionistic linoleum cut of Howard by Duane W. Rimel from the July 1935 Fantasy Magazine; a map of the Hyborian Age by Howard.

Dedication and Foreword, by the publishers / Introduction, a letter from H. P. Lovecraft to Donald A. Wollheim / The Hyborian Age / A Probable Outline of Conan's Career, by P. Schuyler Miller and John D. Clark

SKULL-FACE AND OTHERS, Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1946, pp. x., 475, \$5.00, o.p., 3,004 copies printed. Jacket design by Hannes Bok.

Foreword, by August Derleth / Which Will Scarcely Be Understood / Robert Ervin Howard: A Memoriam, by H. P. Lovecraft / A Memory of R. E. Howard, by E. Hoffman Price / Wolfshead / The Black Stone / The Horror from the Mound / The Cairn on the Headland / Black Canaan / The Fire of Asshurbanipal / A Man-Eating Jeopard / Skull-Face / The Hyborian Age / Worms of the Earth / The Valley of the Worm / Skulls in the Stars / Rattle of Bones / The Hills of the Dead / Wings in the Night / The Shadow Kingdom / The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune / Kings of the Night / The Phoenix on the Sword / The Scarlet Citadel / The Tower of the Elephant / Rogues in the House / Shadows in Zamboula / Lines Written in the Realization That I Must Die

CONAN THE CONQUEROR, Gnome Press, New York, 1950, pp. 255, \$2.75, o.p. Introduction by John D. Clark, jacket design by David Kyle with illustration by John Forte. Endpapers: map of the Hyborian Age by David Kyle. / Ace Books, Inc., 1953, pp. 187, 35¢, o.p. Paperbound, cover design by Norm Saunders. (Ace Double Novel D-36, with THE SWORD OF RHIANNON by Leigh Brackett) / T. V. Boardman, London, 1954, pp. 256, 9s 6d, o.p. Introduction by John D. Clark, jacket artist unknown. Frontispiece: map of the Hyborian Age by David Kyle.

(Contains the novel published in Weird Tales under title "The Hour of the Dragon".)

THE SWORD OF CONAN, Gnome Press, New York, 1952, pp. 251, \$2.75, o.p. Jacket design by David Kyle. Endpapers: map of the Hyborian Age by David Kyle.

The People of the Black Circle / The Slithering Shadow / The Pool of the Black One / Red Nails

KING CONAN, Gnome Press, New York, 1953, pp. 255, \$3.00, o.p. Jacket design by David Kyle. Endpapers: map of the Hyborian Age by David Kyle.

Introduction, by L. Sprague de Camp / Jewels of Gwahlur / Beyond the Black River / The Treasure of Trancos¹ / The Phoenix on the Sword / The Scarlet Citadel

THE COMING OF CONAN, Gnome Press, New York, 1953, pp. 224, \$3.00, o.p. Jacket design by Frank Kelly Freas.

Howard's Letter to P. Schuyler Miller / H. P. L. Letter to Donald Wollheim / The Hyborian Age, by Robert E. Howard and John D. Clark² / The Shadow Kingdom / The Mirrors of Tuzun Thune / The King and the Oak / An Informal Biography of Conan the Cimmerian, by John D. Clark and P. Schuyler Miller³ / The Tower of the Elephant / The God in the Bowl¹ / Rogues in the House / The Frost-Giant's Daughter¹ / Queen of the Black Coast

CONAN THE BARBARIAN, Gnome Press, New York, 1954, pp. 224, \$3.00, o.p. Jacket design by Emsh.

Black Colossus / Shadows in the Moonlight / A Witch Shall Be Born / Shadows in Zamboula / The Devil in Iron

TALES OF CONAN (with L. Sprague de Camp), Gnome Press, New York, 1955, pp. 218, \$3.00. Jacket design by Emsh.

Introduction, by P. Schuyler Miller / Note, by L. Sprague de Camp / The Blood-Stained God / Hawks

Over Shem / The Road of the Eagles / The Flame-
Knife

ALWAYS COMES EVENING, collected poems, compiled by
Glenn Lord, Arkham House, Sauk City, Wisconsin, 1957,
pp. x., 86, \$3.00, o.p., 636 copies printed. Jacket design
by Frank Utpatel.

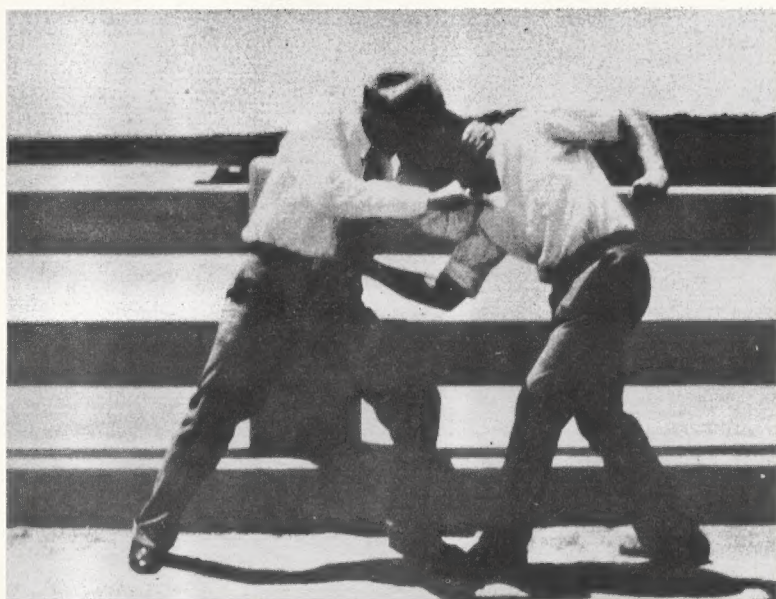
Foreword, by Glenn Lord / Introduction, by Dale
Hart / Always Comes Evening / The Poets / The
Singer in the Mist / Solomon Kane's Homecoming /
Futility / The Song of the Bats / The Moor Ghost /
Recompense / The Hills of Kandahar / Which Will
Scarcely Be Understood / Haunting Columns / The
Last Hour / Ships / The King and the Oak / The
Riders of Babylon / Easter Island / Moon Mockery /
Shadows on the Road / The Soul-Eater / The Dream
and the Shadow / The Ghost Kings / Desert Dawn /
An Open Window / The Song of a Mad Minstrel / The
Gates of Nineveh / Fragment / The Harp of Alfred /
Remembrance / Crete / Forbidden Magic / Black
Chant Imperial / A Song out of Midian / Arkham /
Voices of the Night / Song at Midnight / The Ride of
Falume / Autumn / Dead Man's Hate / One Who
Comes at Eventide / To a Woman / Emancipation /
Retribution / Chant of the White Beard / Rune / The
Road of Azrael / Song of the Pict / Prince and Beggar
/ Hymn of Hatred / Invective / Men of the Shadows /
Babylon / Niflheim / The Heart of the Sea's Desire /
Laughter in the Gulfs / A Song of the Don Cossacks /
The Gods of Easter Island / Nisapur / Moon Shame /
The Tempter / Lines Written in the Realization That
I Must Die / Chapter Headings

THE DARK MAN AND OTHERS, Arkham House, Sauk City,
Wisconsin, 1963, pp. viii., 284, \$5.00, approximately
2000 copies printed. Jacket design by Frank Utpatel.

Introduction, by August Derleth / The Voice of El-Lil / Pigeons from Hell / The Dark Man / The Gods of Bal-Sagoth / People of the Dark / The Children of the Night / The Dead Remember / The Man on the Ground / The Garden of Fear / The Thing on the Roof / The Hyena / Dig Me No Grave / The Dream Snake / In the Forest of Villefere / Old Garfield's Heart

ALMURIC, Ace Books, Inc., 1964, pp. 157, 40¢. Paper-bound, #F-305, cover design by Jack Gaughan.

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1. Edited by L. Sprague de Camp.
 2. In part only.
 3. In part only; further extracts from the article appear between stories in the Gnome Press titles with the exception of CONAN THE CONQUEROR and TALES OF CONAN.



TRUETT VINSON

ROBERT E. HOWARD

All fled — all done, so lift me on the pyre;
The Feast is over and the lamps expire.

